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6 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON  
7 AT SEATTLE

8 KANEKA MARIE D. MURRAY,

9 Plaintiff,

10 v.

11 KING COUNTY,

12 Defendant.  
13

CASE NO. 2:25-cv-00600-RSL

ORDER DENYING MOTION FOR  
APPOINTMENT OF COUNSEL

14 This matter comes before the Court on plaintiffs’ “Application for Court-Appointed  
15 Counsel.” Dkt. # 5.  
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17 Generally, a person has no right to counsel in civil actions. *See Storseth v.*  
18 *Spellman*, 654 F.2d 1349, 1353 (9th Cir. 1981). However, a court may under  
19 “exceptional circumstances” appoint counsel for indigent civil litigants  
20 pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(1). *Agyeman v. Corrs. Corp. of Am.*, 390  
21 F.3d 1101, 1103 (9th Cir. 2004). When determining whether “exceptional  
22 circumstances” exist, a court must consider “the likelihood of success on the  
23 merits as well as the ability of the petitioner to articulate his claims pro se in  
24 light of the complexity of the legal issues involved.” *Weygandt v. Look*, 718  
F.2d 952, 954 (9th Cir. 1983). Neither of these considerations is dispositive  
and instead must be viewed together. *Wilborn v. Escalderon*, 789 F.2d 1328,  
1331 (9th Cir. 1986).

25 *Palmer v. Valdez*, 560 F.3d 965, 970 (9th Cir. 2009). In addition, the party seeking  
26 appointment of counsel must show indigency. 29 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(1).

1 Plaintiff has been granted leave to proceed *in forma pauperis*, and indigency will  
2 therefore be presumed. Nevertheless, the Court finds that appointment of counsel is not  
3 warranted here. Plaintiff's claims of disability discrimination/failure to accommodate have  
4 been rejected by both the Washington State Human Rights Commission and the Equal  
5 Employment Opportunity Commission. While there is certainly the possibility of success  
6 on the merits, the adverse agency determinations suggest otherwise. With regards to  
7 plaintiff's ability to articulate her claims, the facts are not particularly complex, and  
8 plaintiff appears to have an understanding of the relevant legal issues sufficient to pursue  
9 agency and judicial relief.  
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12 Plaintiff has not shown the sort of exceptional circumstances that justify  
13 appointment of counsel at the public's expense. The motion for appointment of counsel is  
14 therefore DENIED.  
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17 Dated this 29th day of April, 2025.

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20 Robert S. Lasnik  
21 United States District Judge  
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